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Commercial vs Usability Goals In E-commerce Website Design

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I hereby declare that the work submitted is mine and that where I have made use of another's work, I have attributed the source(s) according to the Regulations set in the Student's Handbook.

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Abstract

This dissertation was written as a part of the MSc in Strategic Product Design at the International Hellenic University.

In contemporary e-commerce websites (e.g. e-shops, travel booking sites) , a trend of cross-selling propositions can be seen that interfere with the primary goal of the user. This dissertation studied the possible negative effects of this recent commercial trend on the usability and the user experience of e-commerce websites. Furthermore, it proposes some directions for reconciling these two seemingly conflicting goals.

Prof. D. Nathanael conceived of the presented idea. With Prof. D. Nathanael's mentorship and supportiveness, Apostolos Makris developed the cross-selling techniques analysis and presented an improved version of the existing examples. Prof. D. Nathanael encouraged Apostolos Makris to investigate the different cross-selling methods and supervised the findings of this work. All authors discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript.

Keywords: E- commerce, usability, user experience, cross-selling, up-selling

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Preface

The basis of this research originally stemmed from my passion for product design and e-commerce. As the world moves further into the digital age, designing user-centric online stores have become a necessary need while more and more users are shopping online. My passion is not only to find out what already works for the online stores, but also to come up with new ideas that will improve the entire user experience for the future generations. In truth, I could not have achieved that without the strong support of my professor D. Nathanael who has provided advice with patience and guidance throughout the research process. Thank you all for your unwavering support.

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1. Introduction

With the tremendous evolution of computer systems and the penetration of computer devices and software into our homes, the need of ergonomic designs and user-friendly environments has become inevitable. In these terms, the usability of those platforms is related to the extent that they provide effectiveness, efficiency, engagingness, error tolerance and ease of learning, therefore, the current research in e-commerce systems defines usability based on their cross-selling and up-selling techniques. Cross-selling and up-selling techniques are sales tactics aimed at generating more sales by suggesting additional, related or complementary items to a buyer who is already committed to making a purchase. By actively cross-selling its products, a company can provide customers with useful information that would be valuable and catch up their attention, but simultaneously , it can harm user-experience and user's satisfaction. Given that, in the next chapters, we are going to analyze all these factors that make these techniques successful and provide some directions for a better integration of these methods inside the various online platforms.

2. Terminology Analysis

Before starting analysing each technique separately, we are going to define a few e-commerce terms that are connected with the techniques. Terms such as cross-selling & up-selling are going to be used often and their understanding should be established from the beginning.

2.1 Cross-selling

We define “cross-selling” as selling additional items that differ from those that a customer has purchased or has expressed an interest in buying previously. We define “cross-selling performance” as the extent to which a salesperson taps his or her customers’ buying potential for such additional items.

2.2 Up-selling

We define “up-selling” as a sales technique, which aims at persuading customers to purchase a more expensive, upgraded or premium version of the chosen item or other add-ons for the purpose of making a bigger sale. E-Commerce businesses often combine upselling and cross-selling techniques (in an attempt) to increase order value and maximize profit.

2.3 Down-selling

A down-sell is defined as the opposite of the up-sell. By that, we mean that a cheaper alternative product is suggested to the customer if he or she does not want the initial offer. For instance, when a customer cannot afford a laptop, an older model desktop might be suggested that costs less.

2.4 Call to action

Call to action (CTA) is defined as a piece of content intended to induce a viewer, reader, or listener from a specific act, typically taking the form of an instruction or directive (e.g. *buy now* or *click here*). A CTA most often refers to the use of words or phrases that can be incorporated into sales scripts, advertising messages or web pages in order to encourage consumers to take prompt action.

2.5 Dark pattern

A dark pattern is a user interface that has been carefully crafted to trick users into doing things, such as buying insurance with their purchase or signing up for recurring bills.

3. Techniques Analysis

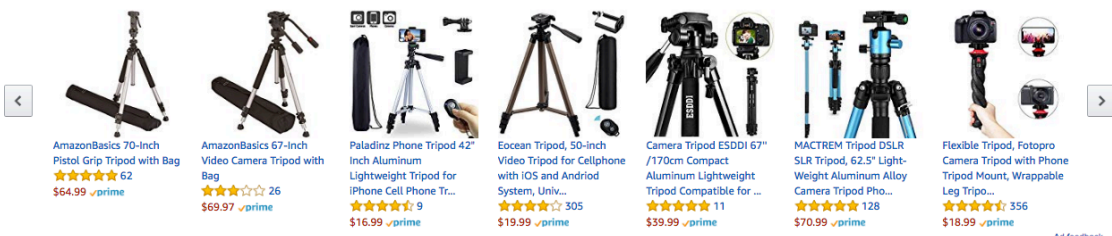
It is generally accepted that, more and more online stores apply a great variety of sales methods in their web pages in order to turn visitors into customers. On the one hand, these techniques inform users about store's content thereby increasing their awareness but, on the other hand, they may damage their experience into the website and the satisfaction they receive by completing a number of tasks. For this purpose, in the sections below, there is going to be an analysis of the various sales methods based on business and user goals level.

3.1 Recommended Products

One of the most common strategies, used for cross-selling and up-selling on the web, is the suggested products on the form of image gallery, appearing either on product or checkout page.

3.1.1 Amazon.com – Sponsored Products To Consider

Sponsored products to consider (What's this?) Page 1 of 48



Product Name	Price	Rating
AmazonBasics 70-Inch Pistol Grip Tripod with Bag	\$64.99 ✓prime	★★★★☆ 62
AmazonBasics 67-Inch Video Camera Tripod with Bag	\$69.97 ✓prime	★★★★☆ 26
Paladinz Phone Tripod 42" Inch Aluminum Lightweight Tripod for iPhone Cell Phone Tr...	\$16.99 ✓prime	★★★★☆ 9
Eocean Tripod, 50-Inch Video Tripod for Cellphone with iOS and Android System, Univ...	\$19.99 ✓prime	★★★★☆ 305
Camera Tripod ESDDI 67" /170cm Compact Aluminum Lightweight Tripod Compatible for ...	\$39.99 ✓prime	★★★★☆ 11
MACTREM Tripod DSLR SLR Tripod, 62.5" Light-Weight Aluminum Alloy Camera Tripod Pho...	\$70.99 ✓prime	★★★★☆ 128
Flexible Tripod, Fotopro Camera Tripod with Phone Tripod Mount, Wrappable Leg Tripo...	\$18.99 ✓prime	★★★★☆ 356

Special offers and product promotions

Size: 60-Inch | Configuration: Tripod Only

- **Buy Used and Save:** Buy a Used "AmazonBasics 60-Inch Lightweight Tripod with Bag" and save 7% off the \$23.49 list price. Buy with confidence as the condition of this item and its timely delivery are guaranteed under the "Amazon A-to-z Guarantee". See all Used offers.
- **Your cost could be \$0.00 instead of \$23.49!** Get a **\$50 Amazon.com Gift Card** instantly upon approval for the **Amazon Rewards Visa Card** [Apply now](#)

Have a question?

Find answers in product info, Q&As, reviews

Figure 1. Sponsored products to consider

Even though there are plenty of online stores using this technique, amazon.com have managed to get the most out of it. As it is shown in the picture above, Amazon uses a gallery carousel in order to present a great number of products and satisfy a couple of different goals.

The first and major one is the up-selling. Looking at the suggested products, more than 57% of them are similar to the chosen item, with the price to be double or even triple. After the up-selling, the second in the hierarchy is the down-selling. In case that customers are looking for something cheaper, there are two more options that appear instantly in front of their eyes. The third, and apparently less important one is the cross-selling, by suggesting products similar to the product page item that fit customer's interests. In our case, the Flexible Tripod which costs \$18.99 comes as an extra need that may have been generated by the side of customers. Finally, a less obvious target is feeding the paid-ad system that Amazon has developed. Given that, Amazon intends to make a profit by advertising the sellers who have decided to promote their products through the platform. It seems to be a "win-win" situation and Amazon takes care of that.

In order for Amazon to achieve the above purposes, a 5-star rating system and honest customers reviews are used to persuade people. This happens because there is no need to struggle in convincing people to buy if you have earned their trust. Behavioural economists in the Amazon site development have focused on "building" trust in a pleasant user experience. Additionally, another way used by Amazon in order to build trust is the "Prime" attribute on the products. One way to build rapport is by making the customers, members of your own special club. That is exactly what Amazon has done with its \$99 a year Prime membership program, giving them one more reason to follow the safe path. The last convincing method that Amazon implements in this section is exclusivity. As it is shown in the picture above, Amazon lists a couple of tricks that can be used by the customers in order for them to save some money. That information can be an extra excuse for them in order to buy the chosen item even if they were not totally sure about it.

Have a question?

Find answers in product info, Q&As, reviews



From the manufacturer



[View larger](#)

AmazonBasics 60" Lightweight Tripod with Bag

Size it up

This lightweight tripod is perfect for most cameras up to 6.6 pounds. Setup is quick and easy. The included bag makes storage and transport a snap.

The tripod's legs can extend from 20" to 48". Leg locks release smoothly and glide easily to your desired height. Crank up the center post for a tripod that is 60" tall.

Details

- Two built-in bubble view levels
- Quick-release mounting plate
- Zippered bag included
- Suitable for digital, video, or still camera
- Dimensions: 25 (collapsed) x 4 inches; extends up to 60 inches
- Weight: 3 lbs.



On the level

The built-in level above the legs lets you know when the base is level.

Figure 2. Product details

In terms of usability, having as a fact that the goal of the user inside the product page is to get informed about the product and potentially to continue with a purchase, we can easily conclude that the current technique seems to have a more negative than a positive impact on the user for a couple of reasons. The first two are the user's subjective satisfaction and time they need to execute their main task. As we can see on the image above, the product information, which apparently has the biggest value for the user, starts right after the promotional message whose value is, if not zero, minor. The only value that could be included in the list of suggested products is that they provide some similar needs that users have that moment and thus providing an answer to their questions. Given that, It can be easily understood that, the user's subjective satisfaction decreases, and furthermore, the time that the user needs to reach the information increases.

Additionally, Amazon seems to add even more pressure on customers by using sale messages like "Your cost could be \$0.00 instead of \$23.49". Emphasizing on the maximization of profit instead of the viewer's peace of mind, it make customers not to take the right decisions and this is how success rate may fall and error rate increase.

3.1.2 Rynair.com – Recommended For You

The simplest version of this technique is shown in the picture below, with Ryanair.com to suggest complementary services during the checkout process.

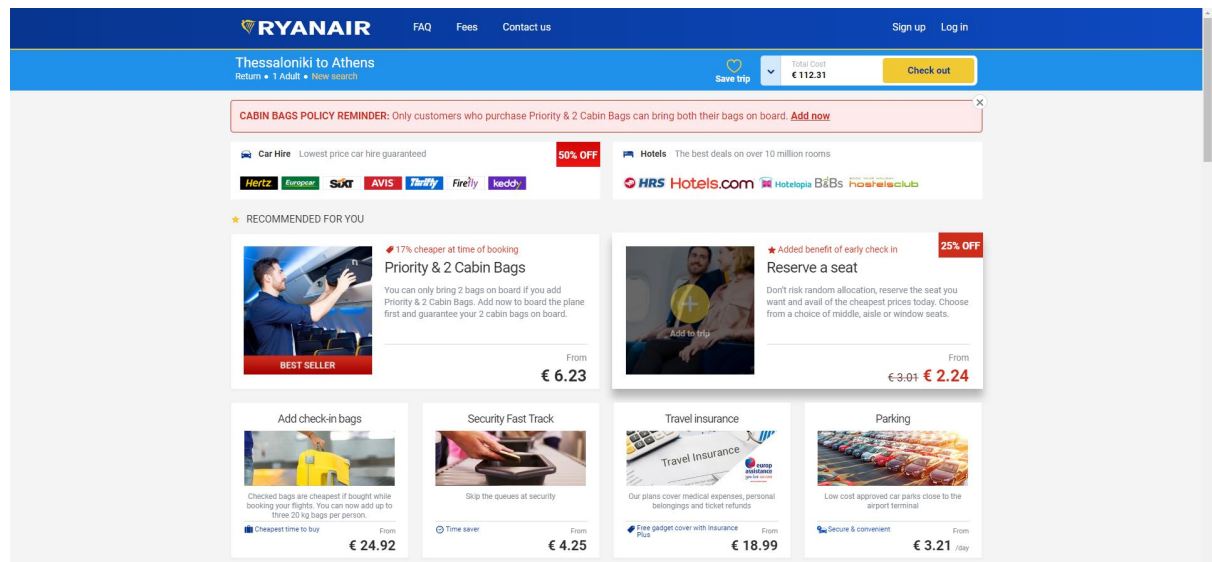


Figure 3. Services recommended for you

Contrary to Amazon's goals, Ryanair has a clear goal of cross-selling since customers have already decided what they want to purchase, and thus, the suggested services, such as renting a car and travel insurance, fulfill supplementary needs.

Ryanair also makes a good effort to persuade customers by using techniques as scarcity and urgency with phrases like "Don't risk random allocation" or "You can only bring 2 bags". Exclusivity is another method being used for the **2 Cabin Bags** and **Reserve a Seat** services as it appears on the labels "17% cheaper at the time of booking" and "Added benefit of early check-in".

Reserving a seat seems to be the major priority for Ryanair since there is a clear distinction on the graphics. The box with this choice includes outer shadows and the price is painted with a dark red color, making the box to differentiate from the others. Finally, the label of 25% discount which is placed on the top right corner of the box, gives another reason to users to check this option first.

Besides reserving a seat option, the second priority in the hierarchy is reserving a priority & 2 cabin bags option. In order for Ryanair to give an extra motivation to

viewers, it names the package as a “Best Seller” using a red label in order to emphasize more. Furthermore, Ryanair decides to add a message on the top of the website referring to the policy concerning the cabin bags, adding the red color both to the text and the background. Given that and applying the call-to-action text “Add now” at the end of the sentence, we conclude that Ryanair combines exclusivity with urgency in order to persuade customers.

Having looked carefully at Ryanair’s services so far, and even though there is a great variety of them, it is profound that the implementation of cross-selling generates some second thoughts about the usability of the website.


First of all, there is a clear delay which is connected with the completion of the customer’s initial goal which is to order the tickets. Since Ryanair repeats that offers in a similar way during the whole checkout process, the steps that the user needs to follow in order to get the tickets increase.

In addition to the above statement, there is a big discussion about the success and error rate in this stage. As it is visible on the image above, it is purposely unclear what the user needs to do in order to proceed to the next step, as the *Check-out* button is in the top right corner and the cross-selling offers cover the 90% of the screen. Considering that, it is more than possible that most of the users will not notice the orange button which is responsible for taking them to the next step and will abandon the process. This fact combined with the urgency that Ryanair creates using red message about the cabins on the top, may decrease the success rate of the user and increase the number of errors.


Last but not least, the usability metric that should be analyzed is user’s subjective satisfaction. Given the previous arguments referred to the negative side of the cross-selling methods, we could easily conclude that the “obstacles” that users encounter until they reach to the initial goal make them unsatisfied on a great extent. However, another point of view says that customers, who seek for the offered services, will be more satisfied by seeing them in front of their eyes instead of searching reach them in a different location in the website. All in all, in this case, user’s subjective satisfaction is kind of objective and actually depends on each user’s preferences.

3.2 What Others Bought First


Related Video Shorts | [Upload your video](#)




Customer Review: A Very Good Tripod For The...
GREGORY




Customer Review: The BEST of the bunch!
JRB




Customer Review: Simple and Affordable
Brighton West



Customer Review: AmazonBasics 60-Inch...
DaveHopf




DPReview Photo Recipe: Outdoor Photography...
DPReview




Customer Review: If you're looking for a...
Lean Strategies Internatio...


What other items do customers buy after viewing this item?




AmazonBasics 50-Inch Lightweight Tripod with Bag
★★★★☆ 3,158
\$14.99 ✓prime



Vastar Universal Smartphone Tripod Adapter Cell Phone Holder Mount Adapter, Fits iPhone,
★★★★☆ 1,199
\$7.99 ✓prime




DIGIANT 50 Inch Aluminum Camera Phone Tripod+ Universal Tripod Smartphone Mount for
★★★★☆ 947
\$11.99 ✓prime



Fotopro Phone Tripod, 39.5 Inch Aluminum Camera Tripod with Bluetooth Remote Control and
\$24.99 ✓prime

Customer questions & answers



45 votes

Question: will this tripod work with any camera oR certain models??

Answer: If you mean, will the bottom of the camera fit into the screw mount, it should. The screw size is standard for ALL cameras, as far as i know.

Figure 4. What other customers bought first

A similar approach to the previous technique is the current one. In this method, titles as “Customers who bought this item also bought” or “Customers also bought” are the most frequently used, however, Amazon.com prefers the use of the title “What other items buy after viewing this item?”. This technique satisfies both cross & up-selling purposes since there is a variety of supplementary and more advanced products than the chosen one.

Additionally, to the rating system that appears on every product, the current technique uses the effect of social proof on its greatest extent. Above the products section, Amazon uses some user-generated videos which explain everything about the products, in order to better inform viewers. Furthermore, the customer Q&A begins immediately after the products listings, and in that way, social proof is covered by every aspect.

Amazon is not the only one who benefits from this situation but the users as well. According to researches, 91 percent of people regularly or occasionally read online

reviews, and 84 percent trust online reviews as much as a personal recommendation. And they make that decision quickly: 68 percent form an opinion after reading between one and six online reviews. Given that, the suggested products combined with reviews and user-generated content can significantly help users to decide, increasing their satisfaction and website's success rate

On the other hand, it should be mentioned that this is the second time that Amazon applies a similar technique inside the product page, and that fact may have a negative effect to a group of users. Even though the product listings are presented as a helping hand, this technique could be considered as a spam by those users who seek for the product reviews and don't want to lose their time.

3.3 Packages Comparison

Comparing products and services is one of the most frequent techniques for up-selling. As it is shown on the examples below, each one of them presents three to four choices to the viewer and each one has different attributes.

Given that the goal for websites is to make the highest profit for every customer, they try to lead customers to the most expensive of the proposed products which apparently has the biggest profit margins. In order to achieve this, there is one fundamental persuasive method which works quite good for each case and it is called the Decoy Effect. The Decoy Effect is a phenomenon whereby consumers will tend to have a specific change in preferences between two options while a third option is presented that is asymmetrically dominated. Thus, it is more than obvious that the current examples try to set higher prices at similar levels in order to lead customers to the most expensive one.

3.3.1 Proflowers.com – Vase options

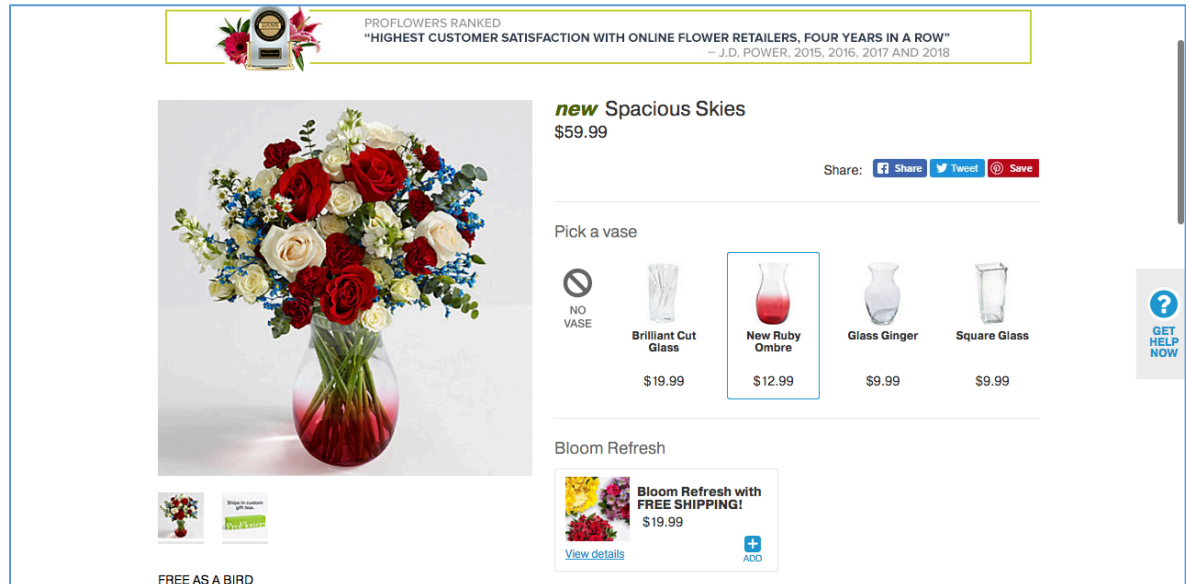


Figure 5. Recommended vases

In the example of proflowers.com, as Decoy Effect describes, we observe symmetry on the prices between the two most expensive products. The first costs \$12.99 and the second is at \$19.99. The item which costs \$19.99 includes the word “Brilliant” on the title, fact that makes it stand out compared to the other simpler titles.

It is interesting to mention at this point that, when you enter on the product page, the chosen vase is the one which costs \$12.99, indicating that user is led to the most expensive choices rather than the cheaper ones. Moreover, the possibility of them making a mistake during the decision process is quite low, since the choices are displayed in a clear way. The above statement makes us conclude that, in terms of usability, the current example covers user’s satisfaction, keeps the execution time in good levels and increases significantly the success rate.

3.3.2 Ryanair.com – Travel packages

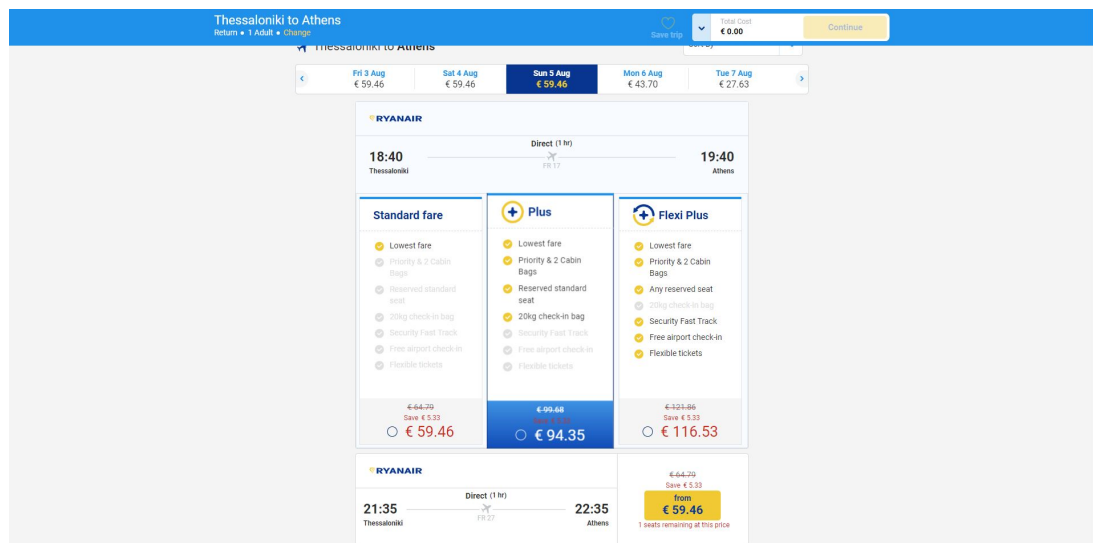


Figure 6. Recommended flight options

The same approach is applied to the second example as well. The two most expensive packages are far more expensive than the first one in order the Decoy Effect to work properly. The third and most expensive package called “Flexi Plus” has the strongest title comparing the other two, and additionally, it includes more features which stand out with the yellow color icon.

Furthermore, in the same way to the previous example, the default choice is the second most expensive but, in this case,, there is a quite darker side in terms of usability. While the user has chosen the traveling package which costs €59.46, the default package by Ryanair costs €94.35. Additionally, to that, the button which defines the continuity of a process as it appears on the bottom right corner of the above picture indicates the initial price that user chose. These two applied methods explain how Ryanair try to confuse the users who will not pay attention to the prices, willing to proceed faster. Given that, it can be easily understood that Ryanair here risks increasing the error rate for higher profits, a fact that has a strong connection with the usability of the website.

3.3.3 Nypost.com – Subscription packages

2 SUBSCRIPTION CHOICES

Select a new subscription that's best for you

GOOD

- ☐ Saturday-Sunday for just **\$2.50** per week
- ☐ Weekday (Mon-Fri) for just **\$4.99** per week

BETTER

- ☐ Extended Weekend (Fri-Sun) for just **\$2.50** per week when you pay now - that's like getting FRIDAY FREE every week!

BEST

- ☒ Daily Delivery (7 Days) for just **\$4.99** per week when you pay now - that's like getting FREE WEEKENDS every week!

NEXT

Offer valid for households that have not had New York Post home delivery in the past 60 days. We reserve the right to discontinue these introductory offers at any time. You must be 18 years or older and have a valid address in the promotional area, on an active delivery route, to participate in this offer. Please allow 2 to 3 business days for your delivery to start.

Figure 7. Subscription packages

In our final example, the two most expensive packages seem identical, with the great emphasis to be given in the most expensive one which is characterized as the “Best”.

Contrary to the previous examples, this one picks the third and most expensive choice as the default one, using smaller and more difficult to read letters, below the call to action button, in order to define some details that may prevent the user from completing the purchase. Again, the navigation of users is easy since the choices are clear, helping them to continue with the process.

3.4 Checkout Process Offers

While customers continue with completing their purchase, they are exposed to more opportunities for shopping as we can see in the pictures below. Either in form of pop-ups or just as a call to action text inside a sentence, both papaki.com and zaful.com have as purpose to up-sale inside their checkout page.

Both websites try to persuade their users by promoting exclusive sales messages, taking advantage of the fact that the customer has already decided to make a purchase

and their confidence levels are high. Additionally, another important feeling that is being generated to the user is the feeling of scarcity and the reason is that both sales messages are visible only when users are about to complete the purchase. There is no second opportunity for these discounts, thus, buyers may consider that as their last chance.

3.4.1 Papaki.gr – Additional domain offer

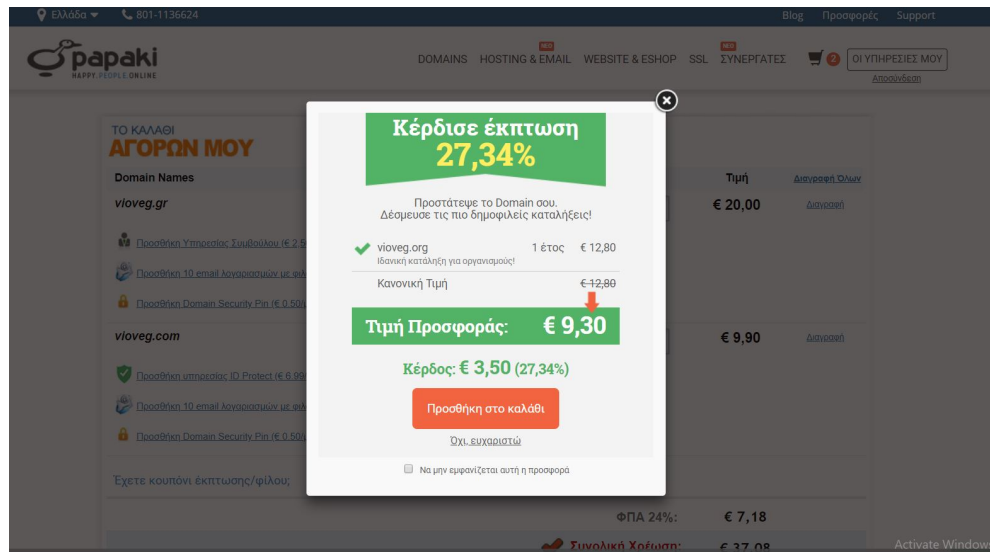


Figure 8. Pop-up offer

Papaki.gr uses pop-ups during the checkout process and as it shown on the example above. Regarding the visual part, Papaki applies yellow and red color to the numbers in order to make customers pay attention to what the gain. Both colors are connected to urgency and attention and the possibility for the user to consider them as important raises.

Considering the pop-up structure, after the main title which presents specifically using decimals the gain of the customer (27,34% discount), there is the explanation of that gain with some calculations. The fact that customers have a tangible offer like that make them rationalize, thinking that the discount really makes sense and is a good deal. Finally, immediately after the short explanation, it appears the add-to-cart button with red color and two choices which give the opportunity to users to avoid the offer.

Now, even though the discount suggestion seems too good to be true, Papaki tries to confuse users in multiple ways. First of all, the main title “Get a discount 27.34”

at a first glance seems to refer to the initial purchase of the user. Contrary to that, the discount relates to the purchase of a new domain name which is nowhere on the customer's order. Given that, and in combination with the big red call-to-action button, users can easily get confused thinking that they received the right discount. That confusion becomes even worse looking at the size of the reject message. The "No, thank you" is much smaller comparing to the button and it seems less a call-to-action element.

Regarding to the user's experience with the pop-up, as Jakob Nielsen presents findings of research done by Yahoo! and eBay, pop-ups are known to be the most disliked elements inside a website for users. Given that, it is quite possible that users will also find that pop-up annoying since it prevents them from being close to their final goal. Finally , in the current example we could say that this cross-selling method does not improve website's usability since it is required more time for users to complete their task, and thus, their subjective satisfaction decreases on a great extent.

3.4.2 Zaful.com – Checkout discount coupon

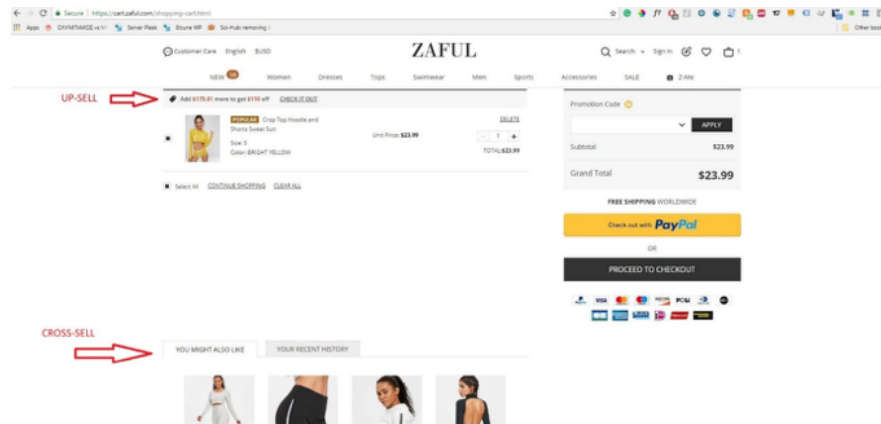


Figure 9. Checkout up-sell and cross-sell

The example of zaful.com is much simpler since the up-sell is defined inside a sentence. The message includes the numbers with red colour in order to bring the attention to the user, and at the end of the sentence, there is a call-to-action text which represents a hyperlink as it is underlined with blue colour.

3.5 Post-Purchase Email

Another great way for online stores to achieve cross-selling is by promoting their products through their emails. In the examples below, it is profound that both huckberry.com and howellita.com try to achieve the cross-sell inside the after-purchase email.

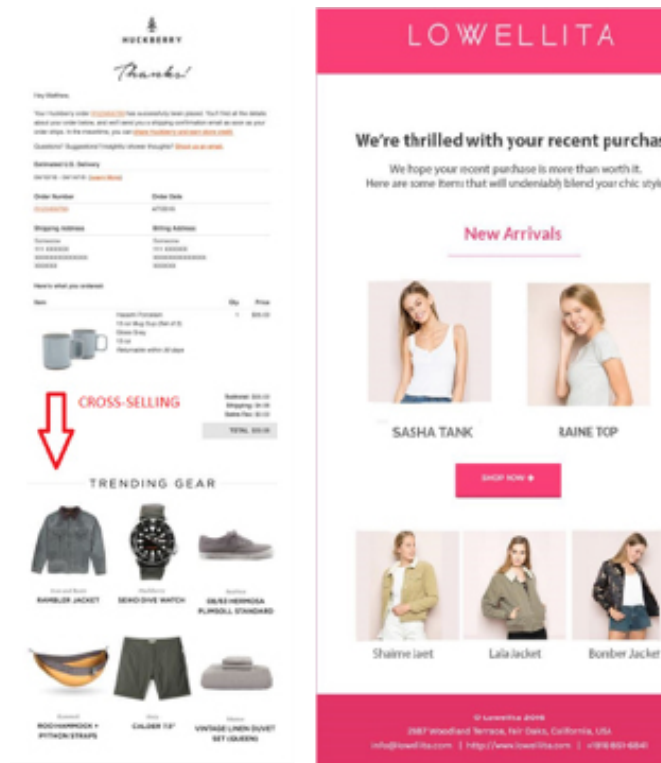


Figure 10. Post-purchase emails

The “Trending gear” and “New Arrivals” respectively, show that both emails focus on urgency as the method of persuading customers to take an action. Both emails intent to keep it simple by just adding minimalistic titles and images with a single-color background. Finally, the email of Lowellita adds a “Shop Now” button giving a clear text message to customers and helping them to act with a single click.

3.6 Frequently Bought Together

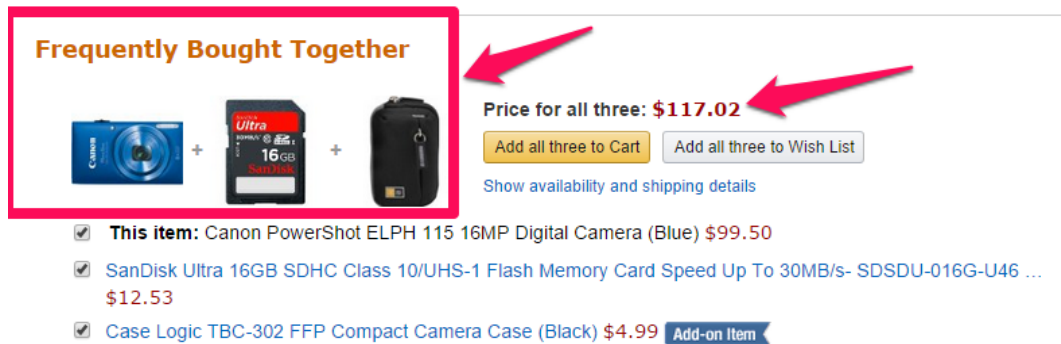


Figure 11. Frequently-bought-together bundle

When you visit Amazon and choose the Canon Powershot Elph digital camera, Amazon will automatically show you other items (a flash memory card and compact camera case) that are “frequently bought together,” as shown in the image above.

The “Frequently Bought Together” technique is used by Amazon and has multiple purposes. At first, there is clearly a cross-selling approach by Amazon since it recommends their customer to buy another product that complements their existing purchase. Additionally, by bundling the three products as shown above there is an intention of increasing the value of the order which is a message of up-selling.

Regarding the cross-selling approach, Amazon is based on the persuasive method of social proof, pointing out what has already made sense to other customers who bought this package. In online shopping, trust plays a critical role in humans’ decisions and in this way customers can trust other people choices.

From another point of view, Amazon focuses on increasing the perceived value by bundling the products. Amazon does that a lot, as the screenshot above shows. Research from Harvard Business School showed that some customers waited before buying games consoles, but that bundles enticed some consumers to buy earlier. The psychological reason that bundles work is connected to their perceived value. When two or more products/items are bundled together and sold as one, that can increase the perceived value, as well as the Average Order Value of a particular product.

As for the visual part and usability that offers, we observe the deep red color of the price which is associated with vigour, courage, and willpower. In this way, Amazon gives online shoppers the courage to place the order immediately. Additionally, the “Add all

three to Cart” call-to-action button in combination with the checked boxes, give buyers the confidence to secure the items, without necessarily paying for it right away. So, despite the fact that this bundling of products is not necessarily useful for the users who seek more information about the product, there is a good amount of value for the users who feel confident with buying the chosen item and have a previous experience with the interface of Amazon. For that group of people, the execution time decreases significantly since they don’t need to search and add on cart those supplementary products and, for that reason, their subjective satisfaction increases.

3.7 Newsletter Technique

It has been visible so far that every technique has either a cross-sell or an up-sell approach, with some of them to combine multiple purposes. In our final example, the tools and methods which are going to be presented, have neither a cross-sell nor an up-sell purpose at the moment they appear on users, however, when users decide to interact with them, they will go into a loop of start facing them.

As shown on the pictures below, both zaful.com and romwee.com give the opportunity to the users to get some discount coupon by joining their newsletter lists. In the world of online sales, email marketing is one of the most efficient methods to achieve sales and both companies seem to understand that. This is why their initial goal is to increase their email list and after increasing the list and building trust with the customers, they are going to start applying the cross-selling and up-selling techniques inside the emails.

Both the pop up by romwee.com and the sign-up form by zaful.com work in two dimensions in order to persuade their customers to take an action. The first and most important one is the exclusivity. The discount coupons can be used only by the members of newsletter list and thus make the customers feel more special. The second dimension is the one of scarcity. After customers subscribing to the newsletter list, they have the opportunity to use the coupon only once, which make this opportunity even more valuable in the eyes of users. Especially, in the second case with the pop-up, users may feel an uncertainty about closing the pop-up and losing the opportunity of applying the discount. Regarding the visual part is clear that the emphasis is given on the number of

the discount, and the reason is that both examples want to give a tangible message to the viewers.

3.7.1 Zaful.com – Footer sign up form

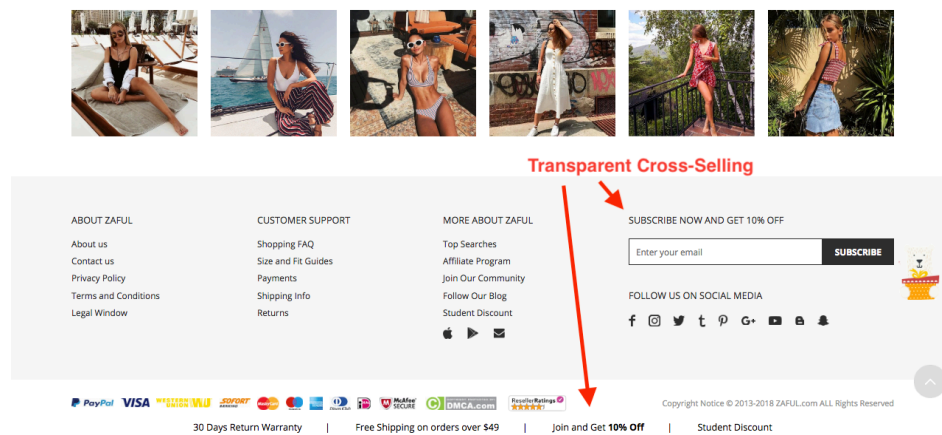


Figure 12. Transparent cross-selling

In zaful.com the “10% discount” appears both as a form on the footer and as a sticky header with bold letters. In terms of usability, the sticky header which is always in on the user’s screen could be considered as a spam since users cannot hide it, however, its small height does not prevent customers from viewing the information on the website.

3.7.2 Romwe.com – Pop up sign up form

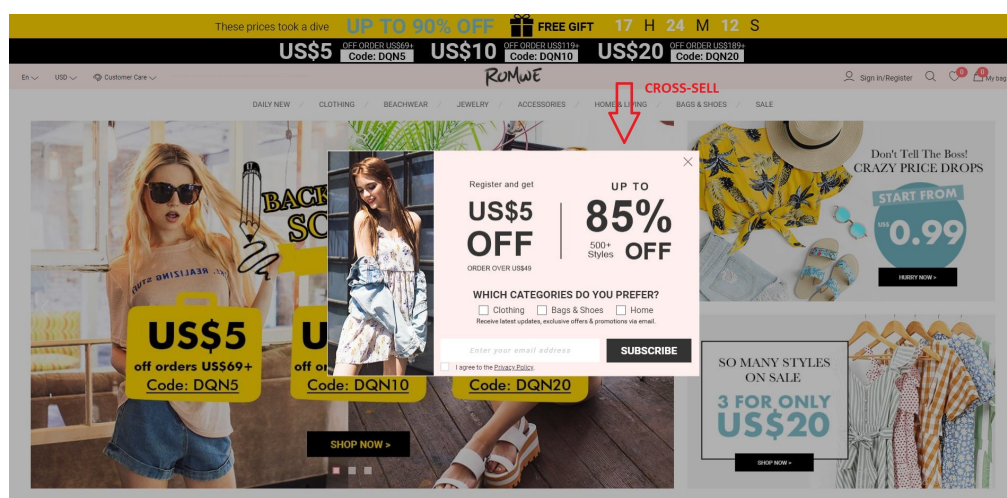


Figure 13. Pop-up offers

Contrary to Zaful, in romwe.com the discount text has clearly a much bigger size than the other text and covers the majority of pop-up's space, showing where Romwe wants to bring the attention.

Except for the parts that Romwe wants customers to pay attention, there are few elements on the pop up that seem to be quite hidden for a variety of reasons. First of all, below the big discount title "US\$5 OFF" there is a much thinner and smaller one which refers to the minimum amount of the order that someone needs to go through in order to receive that discount. Finally, the same method is followed for the privacy policy agreement which is on the bottom of the pop-up, with the text to appear quite tiny inside the box.

Finally, as for the total user experience based on this cross-selling method, since we have already mentioned the negative effects of pop-ups, it is profound that users may be annoyed here as well. However, despite the fact that the majority of customers do not appreciate pop-ups, researches show that coupons change buyers behaviour, increasing their possibility to continue with a purchase. Baring that in mind, we have concluded that pop-ups can either have a positive or negative impact on users depending on the user group and sector that each customer belongs.

4. User-Centric Techniques Analysis

In the previous chapter, we focused on the positive and negative effects of all those different sales techniques regarding the user's experience inside the online platforms. Observing that the majority of those methods include few negative effects on a usability level, we are going to present a number of approaches that try to come close to the user and its needs providing a better experience.

4.1 Upgrades

In a world where online companies offer paid services to their clients, it is known that the goal of every online store is to sell the most profitable plan, which is usually the one with the highest price. At the same time, the business goals of a website should correspond to the goals of its users in the best possible way, a fact that is absolutely connected to the usability of each platform. For that purposes, we are going to examine the method that Dropbox applies in order to force users becoming new customers and in the same time to minimize the possibilities that the upgrade technique will ruin the platform's usability.

4.1.1 Dashboard structure and business goals

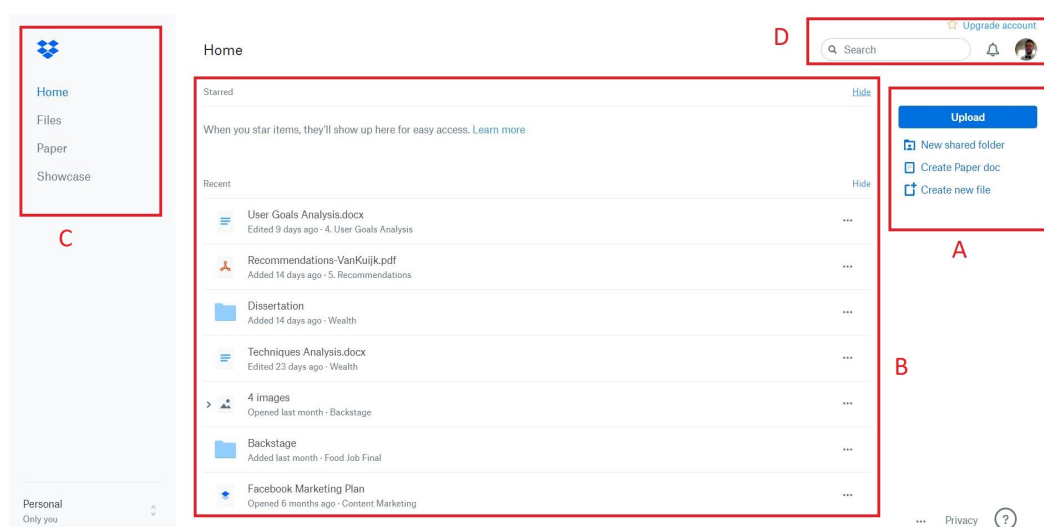


Figure 14. Dropbox's dashboard

Dropbox.com is a modern workspace designed to reduce busywork, so users can focus on the basic things. In the environment of Dropbox, users can upload their files and organize them depending on their needs. Since Dropbox works mostly as a productivity tool for most of people, the factor of usability plays a significant role for them and their experience on the website. As we can see from the picture above, the homepage of Dropbox is separated into four sections based on user goals.

Section A includes the most important actions which are connected to the file management. The “Upload” function, which is responsible for uploading files on the cloud, comes at the top of a hierarchy and stands out inside the blue button. The functions such as **Create new share folder**, **Create Paper doc** and **Create new file** are secondary and depicted as text links below the Upload button.

Coming to section B, there is a representation of the users’ most important files. As it is visible, the files are separated into two lists. The first and most significant is the *Starred* list and the second is the *Recent Files* list. By that representation, users can have a quick access to their most frequent used files, a fact that seems to be crucial for dashboard’s usability.

Again, section C with the fixed navigation toolbar plays a critical role in how fast users can use the platform. The elements of navigation toolbar are prioritized based on the user needs and frequency that each one of those is clicked.

Finally, the D section includes elements which are responsible to inform and help users regarding their profile settings. The search bar helps users to find any kind of information in the website, the notification and profile icons provide users with information about their account and, above that, it comes to the *Upgrade account* option as an upselling technique.

4.1.2 Upgrade account & Usability

As it is shown on the picture above, Dropbox has made a really good job at applying their up-selling technique inside the dashboard, using the *Upgrade account* option on the top right corner. The current method enhances platform’s usability and there are a couple of metrics justifying the above statement.

One of the key usability metrics covered in this example is the time that users need to complete their tasks. As it is shown on the above screenshot, the location of call-to-action

text on the top right corner prevents users from getting distracted and increases the ease of completion rate.

Moreover, the location of the text is connected to another significant usability metric, the success rate. As we have already mentioned, the section *D* is responsible for the account information and users can easily relate the *Upgrade account* option to the related option in that area. This categorization helps users to get a better understanding of Dropbox's structure boosting the completion and minimizing the error rate during the execution process.

The last significant usability metric covered in this example is the user's subjective satisfaction. The use of a productivity tool should make the user's life easier and more efficient. Since these aspects are covered by the speed and success in the task execution process, users must be satisfied on a great extent. On the other hand, a negative aspect that may ruin the satisfaction rate is connected to the call-to-action message by itself. The text "Upgrade account" might seem familiar to the expert users but it could also be confusing for the novice users, who have no knowledge about the paid plans. For this reason, we could suppose that Dropbox intends to confuse a group of users by using an abstract message, in order to raise the curiosity and lead users into taking an action.

4.2 Feature Products (Product Page)

As it was mentioned in a previous chapter, one of the most common cross-selling techniques used in the online world is the *Feature Products*. Feature products are usually placed either on the product or the landing page and in our current example, they will be part of the former. Although their existence inside the various platforms provide low-value information to the customers, the example of *Whisky Exchange* website presents a well-organized list of products, showing how Feature Products should be presented inside the product pages for a better usability.

4.2.1 Product page structure and business goals

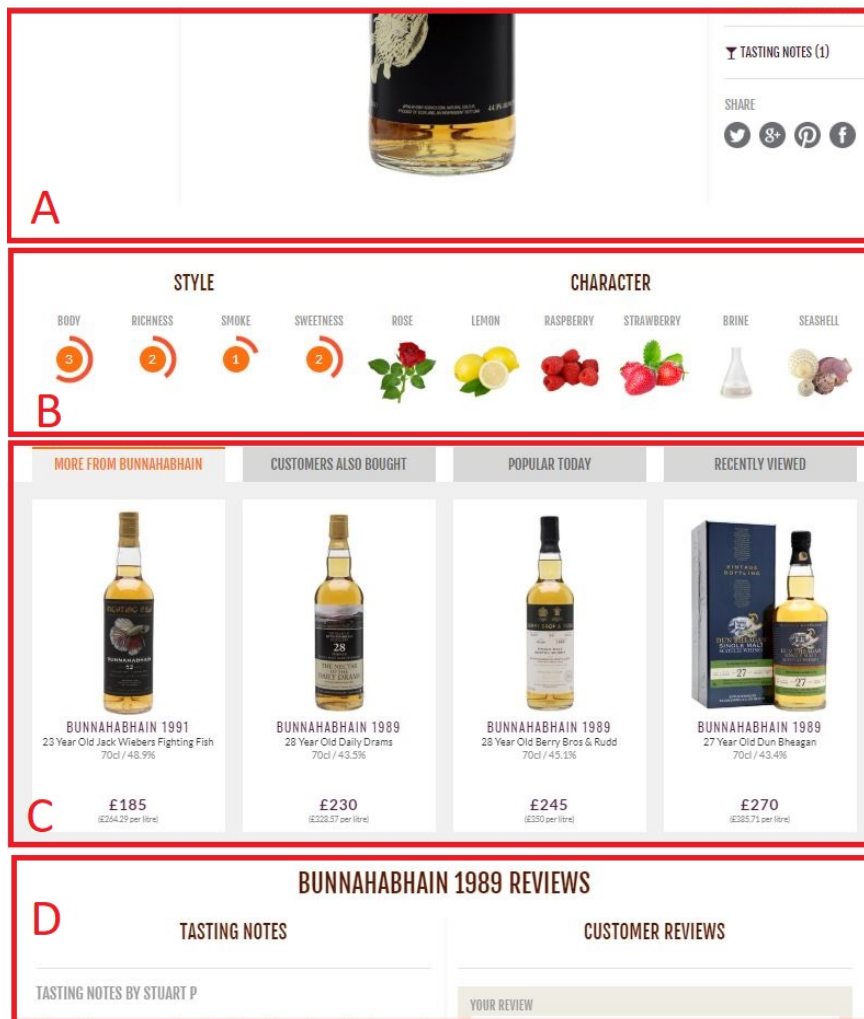


Figure 15. Thewhiskeyexchange.com product page

The Whiskey Exchange is an online store selling unique and high-quality whiskeys. It is a fact that the target audience of the website is individuals with knowledge of the different kinds of whiskeys, thus, each product page pays close attention to the product details.

As it is shown on the above screenshot, the product pages of thewhiskeyexchange.com are separated into four sections based on the customer needs. The first and most vital is the section A, and it gives the basic product information to the users. Information like product images, price and a small description of the product are the initial reasons that customers visited the product page and therefore, these elements are placed there correctly.

The B section gives some additional information to the viewers about the whiskey. Since the audience has advanced knowledge about whiskeys. Information as the style and the character of whiskeys is quite important for customers and this is why the section B is second in priority.

Section C is where feature products take place. Feature products are split into four categories based on user needs. Tabs as *Customers Also Bought* or *Popular Today* help viewers to stay updated about the trends and the tab *Recently Viewed* provides them with a quick access to their recently viewed products.

Finally, section D includes the product reviews. Product reviews are an essential part for the users as they provide trust and loyalty, and typically describe what sets your products apart from others.

4.2.2 Feature Products & Usability

In our example, it is obvious that the cross-selling technique takes place in the C section, where featured products are displayed. Although the current use of that method looks pretty like the common *Feature Products* cross-selling, thewhiskeyexchange.com seems to make the difference concerning the usability aspect, since multiple product lists locate inside four tabs. Contrary to this approach, the majority of websites would use multiple products lists separately, having as a purpose to present to the customers all featured products that are available.

However, the main advantage of the tabs demonstration refers to a key usability metric, which is the ease of completion rate. The fact that the company prefers to hide three lists of featured products, gives the opportunity to the customers to navigate faster on the product page, decreasing the time that they spent to complete their tasks. The above observation also brings a positive impact on the task's success rate as well as the user's objective satisfaction, since the possibility of user's achieving their goals inside the platform increases.

On the other hand, the current technique tends to adopt the business-oriented side, used by the majority of Feature Product techniques on the web, and this refers to the prioritization of the elements. Even though, it is profound that product reviews include more

value than feature products for customers, thewiskeyexchange.com prefers to sacrifice a part of usability, applying the product lists before the reviews, phenomenon which is quite usual in most online stores. Besides that, the current representation of feature products is a great example and satisfies the majority of usability aspects.

4.3 Feature Products (Landing Page)

It is generally known that the landing page inside online stores usually plays the role of an explanatory guide for the selling products. The product information is critical to the consumers' decision-making process and this is why complicated products need more explanation than others with profound use. An online store whose products need little more explanation is crossrope.com. Although crossrope.com sells only two kinds of workout ropes, they have managed to create a great informational story about their products and at the same time apply their cross-cross selling technique without distracting the users.

4.3.1 Landing page structure and business goals

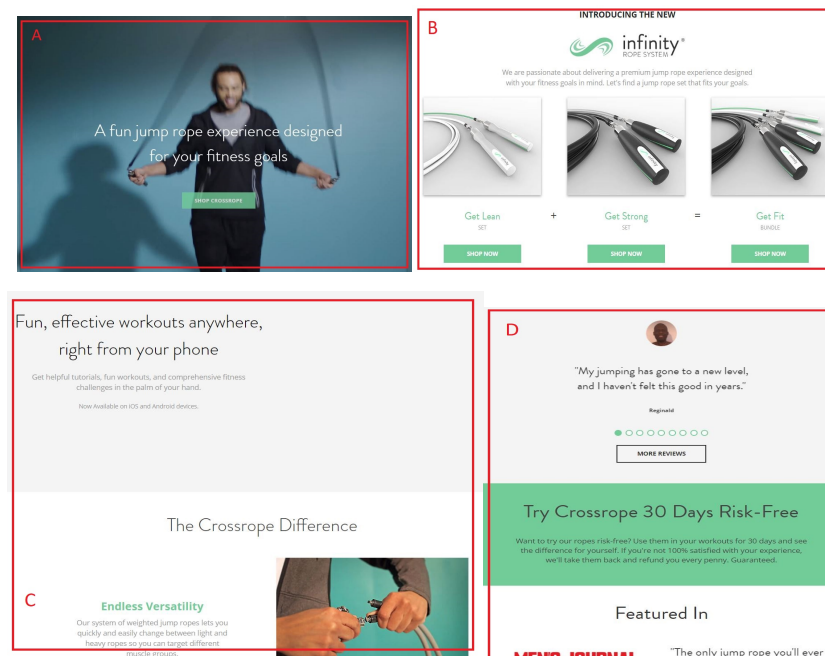


Figure 16. Crossrope.com landing page

As we can see from the above images, the biggest part of the landing page, which is divided into four main sections, focuses on explaining the use of the product and its features.

Section A includes a video with a guy working out using the rope. Since nothing compares with a live product representation, this is probably the best way for a landing page to begin.

After section A comes section B, where the main products are presented. As the image explains, the *Get Lean* rope helps you become leaner and, accordingly, the *Get Fit* rope helps you become stronger. In this part, customers have the chance to come closer to the products as they get informed about their actual use.

C section is responsible for giving additional information about the use of the ropes without covering any specific need of customers, however in section D where testimonials take place, users confirm the quality of ropes by reading the reviews by others.

4.3.2 Feature Products & Usability

The bundle in section B represents the cross-selling method applied on this example. The interesting part here is that both products are presented in an informative, instead of a promotional, way. This strategic application of the feature products plays a significant role on the ease of learning rate inside the landing page, as it helps the viewers to understand how to use both products in order to become fit. While users realize exactly the purpose of each product, the possibility of errors decrease, and the user's satisfaction starts growing.

Another great psychological trick which is crucial for the usability in this case is the number of given choices to the users. As it seems from the above screenshot, users are not overwhelmed with too many options. Two personalized choices are enough for viewers, giving them the opportunity to execute fast and increasing the ease of completion rate.

Given those facts, we could safely conclude that the informative and user-centric approach here diversifies the current technique from the most of the online stores that use the same approach.

4.4 Pop-up Offers

As it was mentioned in a previous chapter, pop-ups are everywhere on the Internet despite the fact that a great amount of people shows a huge dissatisfaction on their view. Since most of them appear distractive and have little connection with the actual goals of users, the

usability factor is affected on a great extent. On the other hand, few examples such as the side or sticky pop-ups tend to have a friendly approach towards the users and their goals inside the various online stores.

4.4.1 Landing page structure and business goals

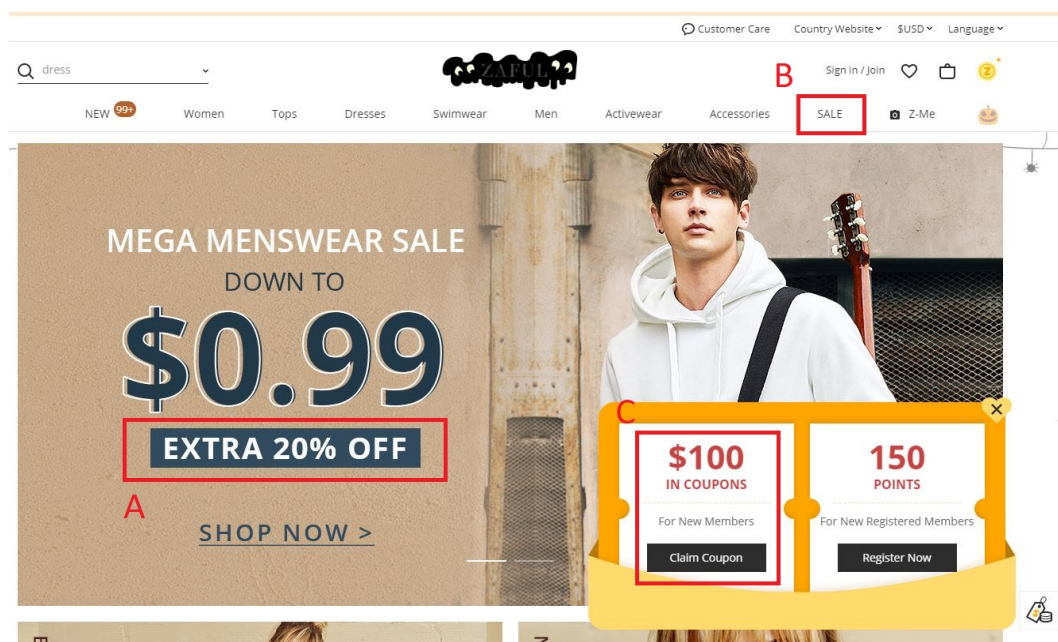


Figure 17. Pop-up widget

A great example, regarding the above statement, is described at [zaful.com](https://www.zaful.com). Zaful represents a clothing brand selling low-cost apparel and accessories. Customers who are used to be buying low-cost clothing have also a tendency to value special offers and discounts more than high-end customers. For that reason, Zaful has set as a top priority on their website the demonstration of sales and that can be seen in three different sections. As it is shown on the above picture, section A, which is connected to the main banner of the landing page, presents the major discount and encourages the customers to shop now. The call-to-action button in the main banner of a landing page is used to be the most clicked element in the landing page and [zaful.com](https://www.zaful.com) wants to take advantage of it.

In section B, the *Sale* category is included on the header navigation. Header plays a critical role on the usability of each platform as a great majority of users searches the header for a specific category.

The last section where sales take place is inside the sticky pop-up in the bottom right corner of the screen. The white box including the coin icon is placed in a fixed position inside the website. When users click on it, a new window with an orange background appears and the two offers are now visible to the customers. Furthermore, if the users decide to accept one of these offers. The double call-to-action offer gives customers the opportunity to take advantage of both discounts and fulfil their desire for low-cost purchases.

4.4.2 The transparent Cross-Selling & Usability

In most online stores, it is known that the applied cross-selling methods are clearly connected to the products. However, in this example, there is a transparency regarding the cross-sell since the sale pitches will start taking place inside the email platforms, after customers having provided Zaful with their emails.

Besides that, the current technique involves a more user-centric approach for a couple of reasons. First of all, Zaful gives to their customers the opportunity to hide the pop-up instead of permanently closing it. Given that, if they eventually decide to hide the box, they can easily return back to it by just clicking the square icon on the bottom. The above scenario is quite possible since most visitors are not always confident to make a purchase in the first place and prefer to use the offered coupons later. Therefore, this double choice given to the users, increase the task success rate and brings less confusion to them.

Another positive aspect of this approach is that customers can ignore the pop-up by continuing scrolling since its place on the right bottom side does not prevent them from viewing the content. Although the majority of users will probably try to hide the pop-up, those who are not experienced enough with that kind of widgets still have the opportunity to continue navigating on the store. In this case, a part of user's satisfaction and task's completion speed may be overlooked but, on the other hand, the website remains scrollable and usable.

All in all, the use of side pop-ups in a form of widgets gives a significant flexibility to the users improving the usability of the platforms and the user-experience overall.

4.5 Products Comparison

Comparing similar products has always been a usual tactic for online stores who plan either to up-sell or down-sell. The comparison of products or services used to take place either inside the product or checkout page and, although this method is quite profound in use, koicomputer.com has decided to apply a more user-centric approach of this strategy.

4.5.1 Shop page structure and business goals

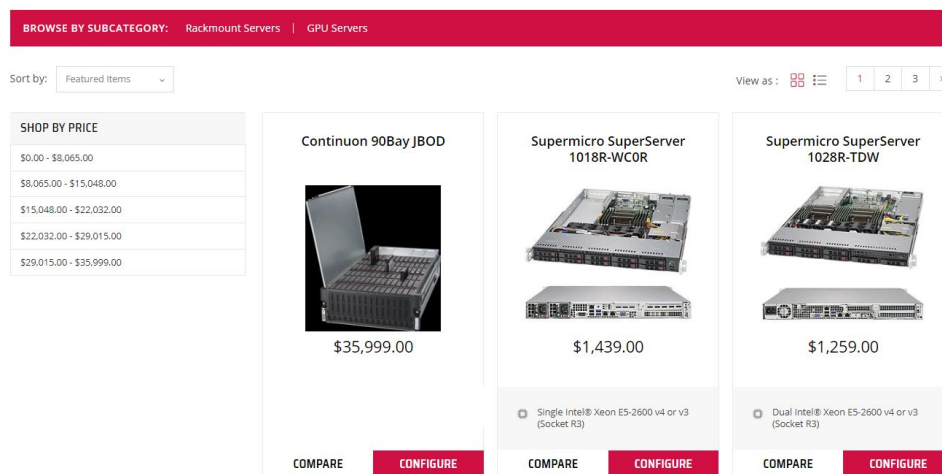


Figure 18. Koicomputer.com shop page

In our current example, everything starts inside the shop page. On the left side of the page, there is a navigation bar with some filters for the customers, helping them to reach faster the products that they are looking for.

The right side of the page includes the basic function which is the list of products. Each product has the *Compare* and *Configure* option. On the one hand, if users decide to continue with a purchase, they click on the *Configure* button, and on the other hand, in case that they are willing to compare a bunch of products, they click on the *Compare* button and the products are being added to the compare list, which is accessible from the top header of the website.

4.5.2 Compare Products & Usability

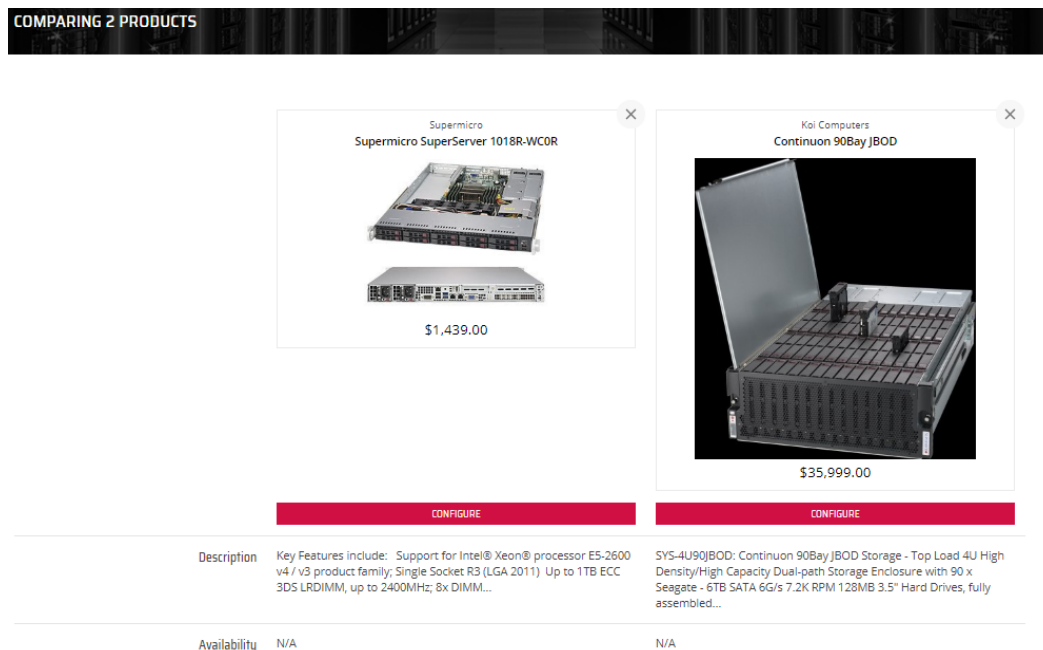


Figure 19. Comparing products page

What makes the use of this method remarkable is that, in contrast to the majority of online stores, which apply the same up-selling technique inside their product or checkout page, Koi Computer does not serve a prepared list with comparable products to its customers. Instead, comparable products are inside the *Compare List*, as it shown on the picture above, and after users having added their preferable products to the *Compare List*, they can examine which one they plan to buy.

In that terms, it is clear that Koi Computer has made a serious improvement on this type of up-selling method, taking care of the website's usability in many ways. The first one is the option of choice given to the users. Thus, customers will spend time on comparing products only in case they are willing to do so and not because they got exposed at store's featured products list. While Koi Computer directs the visitors to this way of use, the completion rate has a positive sign as well as their subjective satisfaction.

On the other hand, a possible drawback of that feature is connected to the possibility of errors and confusions. Since users have to access another part of the website in order to compare their chosen items, it might happen that they cannot reach the *Compare List* as they perceive that the comparison process takes place at the same page. The above scenario does

not happen quite often for experienced users; however, it is a phenomenon that it could occur.

4.6 Checkout Process Offers

Besides the profound cross-selling and up-selling techniques that most of the online companies apply on their platforms during the checkout process, there are few occasions where those techniques support a functionality of a page and actually help users to achieve their end goals. In the below example, there will be an analysis of bonbonbon.com model where the up-selling technique is a part of the buying process, proving us that the combination of business goals and usability is more than achievable.

4.6.1 Build-a-box page structure and business goals



Figure 20. Bonbonbon.com landing page

Bonbonbon.com is an online store where customers can design their own custom box with a great variety of chocolate Bons as they are called. The structure of the landing page is clear enough, and everything leads to the **Build A Box** page as it seems on the call-to-action button on the above picture.

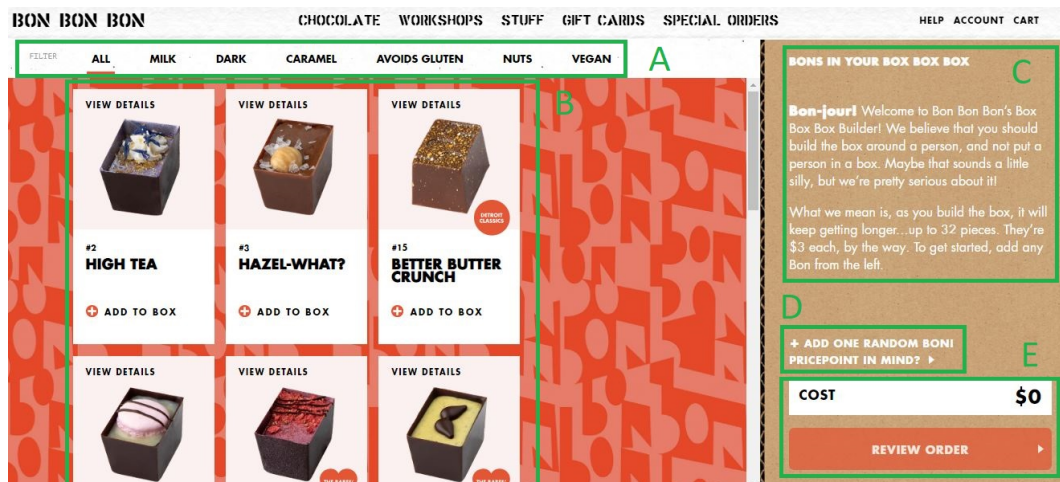


Figure 21. Bonbonbon.com landing page

After users entering the **Build A Box** page, they have multiple options in front of them based on their basic needs. The sections A and B cover the actual purpose of the page which is the box creation. On the one hand, in section A, users can navigate through the different types of Bons and, in section B, they can add Bons to their basket.

The sections C, D, and E refer clearly to the checkout process. Section C describes in few sentences the building-a-box process, section D includes some features that help users decide which Bons to add to their basket, and finally, the E section gives the customers the proper information in order them to continue with checking out.

4.6.2 Add one random Bon & Usability

As we can see from the above screenshot, there is nowhere a clear cross-selling or up-selling message. No pop-ups, featured Bons or premium packages. Instead of that, the company motivates customers to increase the value of their box, by adding a random Bon to it, as it seems on the bottom right corner of the window.

With this method, users can benefit in two ways. The first and most important is that the text message is not an obstacle in order them to continue with their order. It is up to them if they click it or not and their focus does not get lost at any point. In these terms, it is obvious that their execution time decreases, and their subjective satisfaction shows a significant improvement.

The second one is connected to the ease of completion rate during the decision-making process. In case that users have difficulties in choosing a Bon, this option comes as the “escape” button, providing them with a ready solution. The effect of this call-to-action regarding the usability of the platform is crucial, as it increases the success rate for each task and, at the same time, prevents users from errors and confusion.

All in all, bonbonbon.com has done a great job regarding the combination of the business goals and the usability of their platform, setting as a top priority the user instead of the products.

5. Recommendations

After having reviewed a great number of cross-selling and up-selling examples in the previous chapters, we are now going to present some recommendations on the already mentioned techniques in order to increase their usability and provide a better experience for the users.

5.1 Amazon.com - Recommended Products

The screenshot displays an Amazon product page with several recommendation sections. Section A, titled 'Frequently bought together', shows a bundle of a tripod and a camera with a total price of \$31.98. Section B, titled 'Recommended products to consider', shows a grid of various tripods and camera accessories. Section C, titled 'What other items do customers buy after viewing this item?', shows a list of related products like camera mounts and tripods. Other sections include 'Special offers and product promotions', 'Have a question?', 'Related Video Shorts', and 'Customer questions & answers'.

Figure 22. Amazon.com product page

In the previous chapters, we have analysed the three different cross-selling techniques used by Amazon inside every product page. As it is shown on the above screenshot, the section A includes the bundle and represents the first cross-selling technique, section B is the second

one with a couple of sponsored products and the section C has again one more featured products list connected to the consumer behavior of older customers.

Having as a goal to represent an improved version of the above techniques, we are going to focus on a few key usability factors such as the prioritization of elements, the grouping of needs, personalization of content and orientation of the product lists. Each one of them will clearly affect user's objective satisfaction, decreasing the time they need to access the important information and improving the success rate of the page on a great extent.

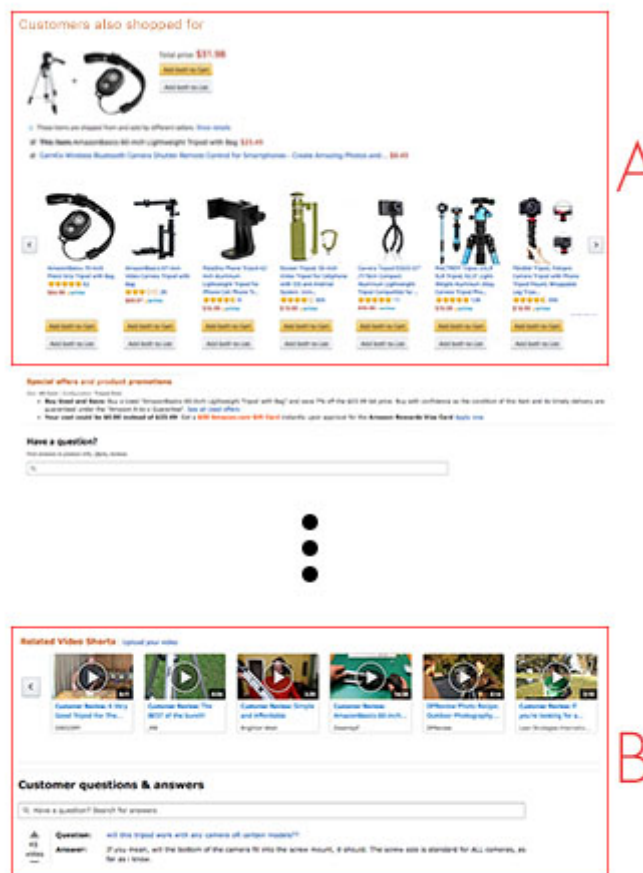


Figure 23. Amazon.com updated product page

In the above screenshot, it is represented the new structure of Amazon's product page after the editing of the existing techniques. The key changes on the picture are that, on the one hand, the cross-selling techniques have decreased by one and been moved into the section A, and on the other hand each one of them has been under some significant configurations.

The first part of those configurations refers to the categorization of techniques, as both the bundle and the suggested products are now connected to the existing customers' behavior. By adding those two methods into one category and displaying the specific source for this set of recommendations we help users browse and find a greater meaning on the displayed products. The more specific these groupings of recommendations are, the more useful they are for directing users to relevant items. If the personalized suggestions are too diverse, making sense of them will be difficult, and people will be less likely to interact with them.

The second improving aspect is the prioritization of elements. A piece of personalized content is always preferred over a generic item. On the web, information that is personalized to the individual is seen as a valuable feature, thus, the higher these individualized recommendation areas appear on the product's page, the more likely it is for the users to notice and use them. Therefore, the second cross-selling technique has been replaced by the third one, which is now close to the top inside the product page.

After the prioritization, it comes to the orientation of the products list. Although the old orientation of the "Customers also bought" list was vertical, the new horizontal version seems to decrease the size of page height, allowing more space to Amazon for adding new products and helping users to reach the information faster.

As for the final part, the "More like this" button with the cream color plays a critical role on the personalization of content and user's long-term satisfaction. When users choose to interact with a site to fine-tune recommendations, they expect this action to be reflected in the recommendations immediately. Even though users' choice will reflect on their future searches, this is a good opportunity for the platform to collect those important data and come out with recommendations that will be one step closer to the customer needs.

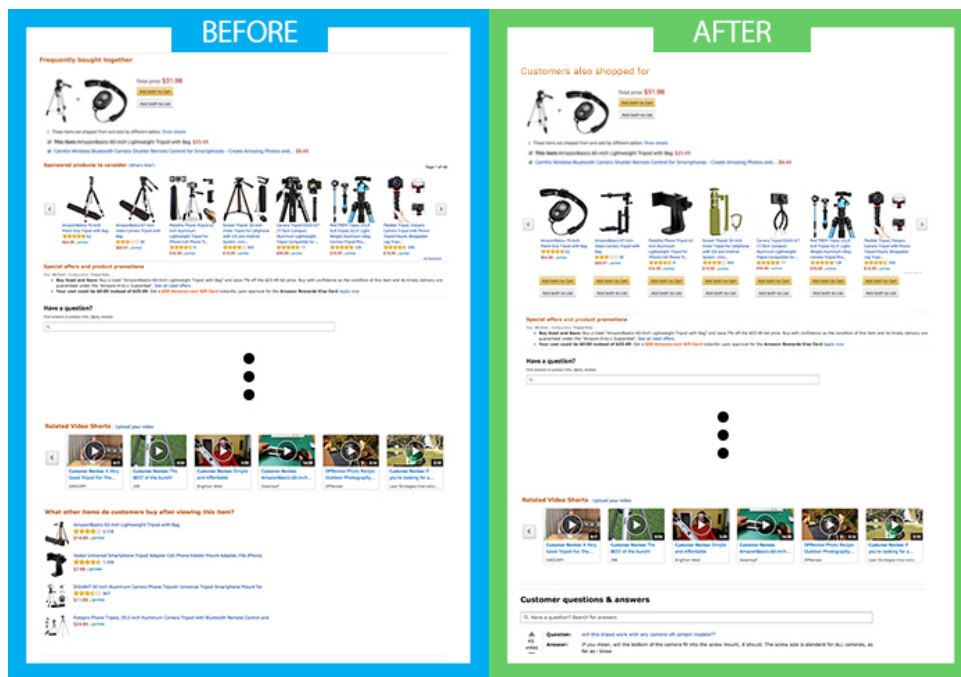


Figure 24. Amazon.com product page - Before and after

5.2 Nypost.com - Packages Comparison

2
SUBSCRIPTION CHOICES

Select a new subscription that's best for you

GOOD

- ☐ Saturday-Sunday for just \$2.50 per week
- ☐ Weekday (Mon-Fri) for just \$4.99 per week

BETTER

- ☐ Extended Weekend (Fri-Sun) for just \$2.50 per week when you pay now - that's like getting FRIDAY FREE every week!

BEST

- ☒ Daily Delivery (7 Days) for just \$4.99 per week when you pay now - that's like getting FREE WEEKENDS every week!

NEXT

Offer valid for households that have not had New York Post home delivery in the past 60 days. We reserve the right to discontinue these introductory offers at any time. You must be 18 years or older and have a valid address in the promotional area, on an active delivery route, to participate in this offer. Please allow 2 to 3 business days for your delivery to start.

Figure 25. Nypost.com subscription packages page

The analysis of improvements continues with the New York Post packages. As it appears on the screenshot above, New York Post uses the Decoy Effect in order to achieve an up-sell during the checkout process. Despite the fact that New York Post tries to persuade users to buy the most expensive package called **BEST**, we could say that the approach on how the

information is being displayed is more confusing than educating. The package **BETTER** seems to be cheaper than the package **GOOD** and the package **BEST** has the same price with the package **GOOD**. Furthermore, a difficulty in the fast understanding of packages duration is observed. Users cannot easily compare this information visually and when they want to get a better understanding, they have to look at each plan separately. The above statement indicates a poor usability grade, letting us design an improved result which is demonstrated on the below picture.

2 SUBSCRIPTION CHOICES

Select a new subscription that's best for you

GOOD Extended Weekend	BETTER Weekday Delivery	BEST Daily Delivery
<input type="radio"/> Monday <input type="radio"/> Tuesday <input type="radio"/> Wednesday <input type="radio"/> Thursday <input checked="" type="radio"/> Friday <input checked="" type="radio"/> Saturday <input checked="" type="radio"/> Sunday	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Monday <input checked="" type="radio"/> Tuesday <input checked="" type="radio"/> Wednesday <input checked="" type="radio"/> Thursday <input checked="" type="radio"/> Friday <input type="radio"/> Saturday <input type="radio"/> Sunday	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Monday <input checked="" type="radio"/> Tuesday <input checked="" type="radio"/> Wednesday <input checked="" type="radio"/> Thursday <input checked="" type="radio"/> Friday <input checked="" type="radio"/> Saturday <input checked="" type="radio"/> Sunday
\$2.50 /week	\$4.00 /week	\$4.99 /week

NEXT

Offer valid for households that have not had New York Post home delivery in the past 60 days. We reserve the right to discontinue these introductory offers at any time. You must be 18 years or older and have a valid address in the promotional area, on an active delivery route, to participate in this offer. Please allow 2 to 3 business days for your delivery to start.

Figure 26. Nypost.com updated subscription packages page

As we have already mentioned, in this example viewers need to know two things in order to proceed: the duration and the price of each package. In the above demonstration, the emphasis is given to those two parameters, in a visual way that can be easily defined by users. Every package is located into a separate column and the offered days are fully visible contrary to the non-included ones. Additionally, the prices are followed by big fonts and, unless users choose one of the three options they cannot proceed to the next step.

All in all, besides the improvement of the up-selling on a usability level, we could point out that the ultimate business goal of New York Post has a great possibility to be achieved with the above demonstration, as the Decoy Effect can work more efficiently when the human focus goes into prices. When users focus on what is really important to them then the ease of completion increases and their subjective satisfaction is affected on a great level.

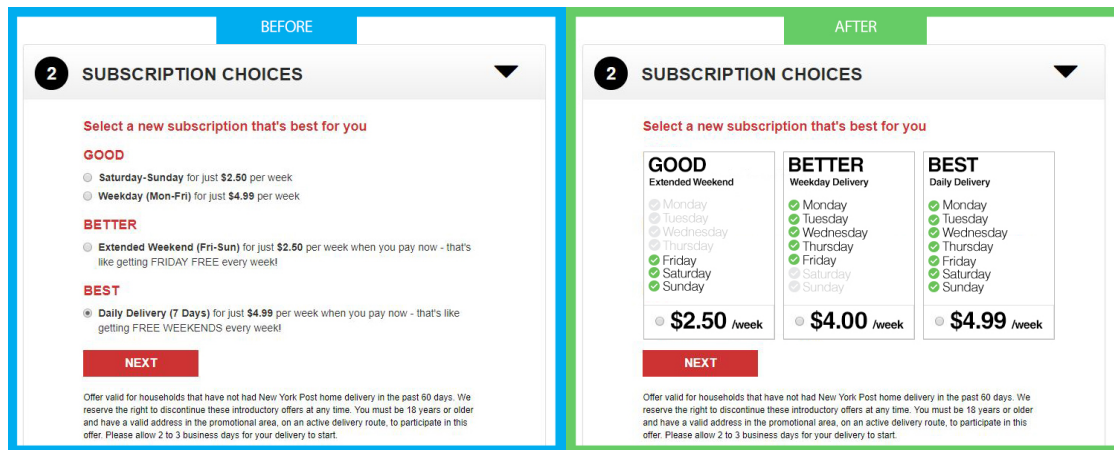


Figure 27. Nypost.com subscription packages page - Before and after

5.3 Bonbonbon.com - Checkout Feature

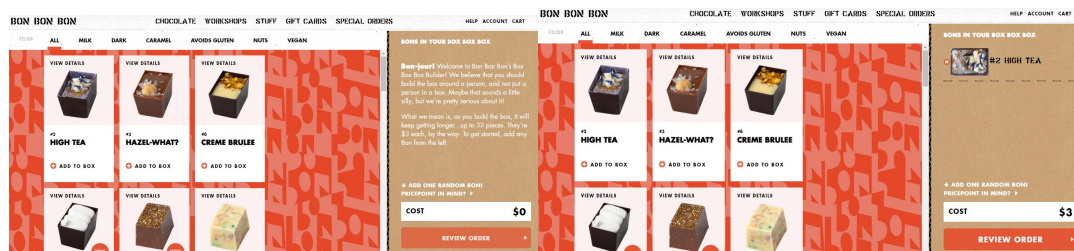


Figure 28. Bonbonbon.com build-a-box page

On the above screenshots, bonbonbon.com uses another smart up-selling technique in order to increase the value of a customer's cart. After customers having clicked on the **ADD TO BOX** text which is located on every product section, the Bon is added to their box. In the same way, when customers click on **ADD ONE RANDOM BON** at the bottom right corner, a random Bon is being added on their cart, covering perfectly both the usability and up-selling goals of the website.

Even though the existing approach represents a great up-selling example, there are still some aspects that could be improved and provide customers with a better experience and business with higher profits.

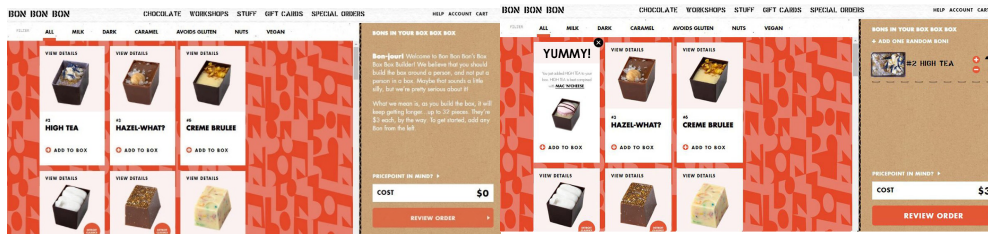


Figure 29. Bonbonbon.com updated build-a-box page

The applied improvements on the current example are displayed on the above images. The left image is connected to the stage that customers have not still added any Bon to their cart and the right one refers to the phase that the first Bon is added.

Regarding the phase one, the page remains the same with the only difference that the option **ADD ONE RANDOM BON** does not exist. The reason that this option has been removed from that phase is that customers will most probably need the help of a random Bon after they have chosen their preferable ones and they lack of ideas. A helping hand for the beginning may seem unnecessary for the visitors and this is the main reason for that exclusion.

At the second phase, it is observed a different approach on the page structure as it shown in the right screenshot. Although the page is still divided into three main sections, section A and B have been under a few important changes based on the interactions and elements' orientation.

In section A, after users have decided to add the **HIGH TEA** Bon to their cart, besides the fact that a new Bon has been added to the cart, they have two new options. The first one refers to the recommendation that they receive, which is followed by a notification message about the add-to-cart action. In our case, the recommended Bon **MAC 'N' CHEESE** replaces the **HIGH TEA** Bon and is combined with the ADD TO CART text such as the other Bons of the page. In case that users want to preview the recommended Bon before adding it to cart, they can simply click on it and the preview page will appear as it seems on the picture below.



Figure 30. Bon preview page

The second new option given to users is the one-off hiding the recommendation and creating the space for the rest Bons by clicking on the X button which is on the top right corner of the square. In the past, customers used to view the same Bon after adding it on the cart and the prioritization of the products remained the same. After those improvements, users have to opportunity to reach easier the other Bons as the hierarchy takes a new form.

Finally, a few minor but still significant improvements have been added to section B as well. First and most important, the up-selling call-to-action text **ADD A RANDOM BON** has been transferred above the added products. In contrary to the existing approach, the call-to-action message locates in the section of the added products, instead of the review order section, since its function is more connected with the cart than with the order. The last improvement of this section refers to the plus and minus option, which are responsible for increasing or decreasing the amount of added Bons, and this is due to the absence of the chosen product in section A, after users have added it to their cart. The given flexibility leads customers to complete their tasks easier increasing the success rate on the decision-making process.

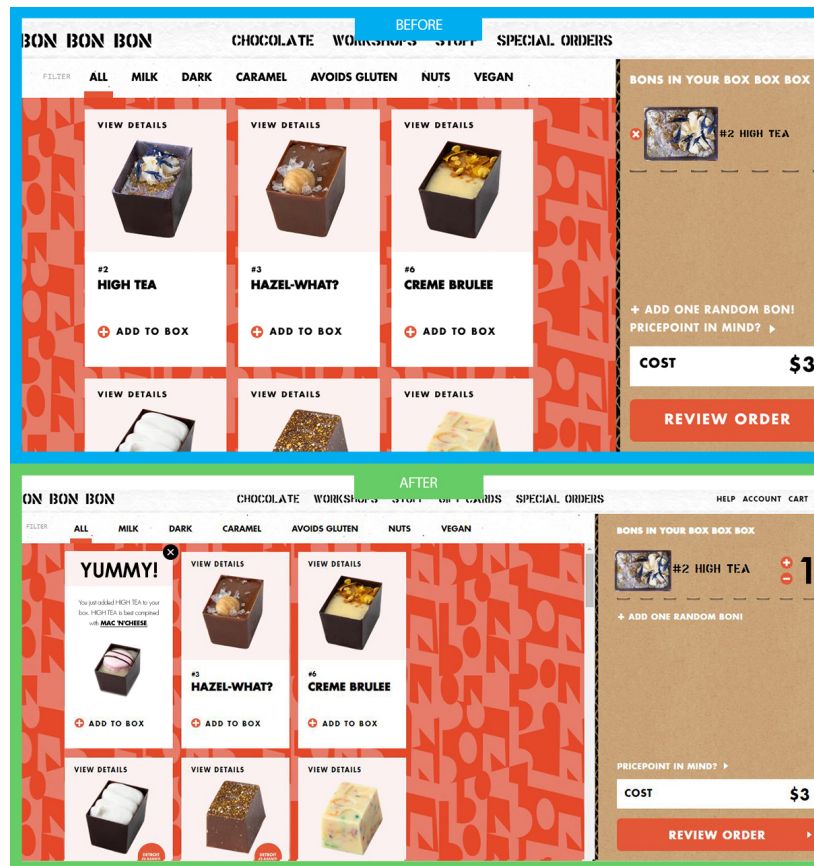


Figure 31. Build a box page - Before and after

5.4 Zaful.com - Checkout Recommended Products

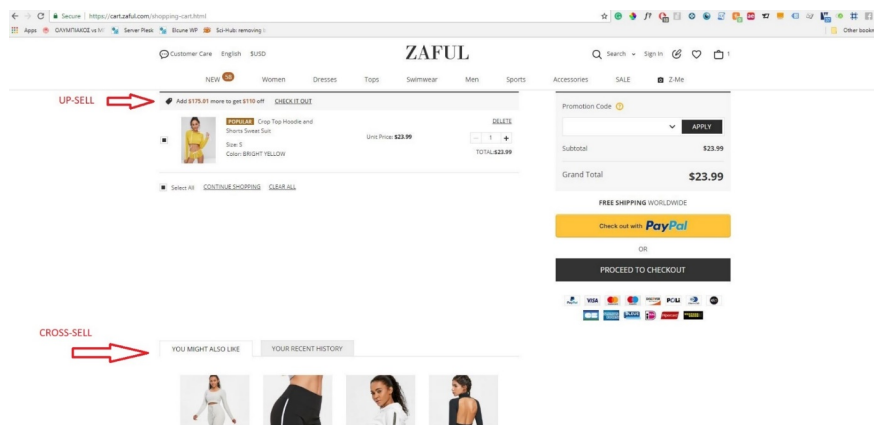


Figure 32. Zaful.com checkout page

Last but not least, we are going to present an advanced version of the cross-selling method that zaful.com applies during its checkout process. As it seems on the above screenshot, Zaful applies two different features on the checkout page in order to lead users to add more products to their cart. On the one hand, the message “Add \$175.01 more to get \$110” and,

on the other hand, the list of the recommended products on the category **YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE** indicate the double way through which Zaful aims at convincing customers to buy additional products.

In contrast to the existing structure of the checkout page, our improved version makes an effort to combine the above two techniques into one, which is going to provide more value to the users allowing them to focus both on their shopping bag and exclusive order separately.

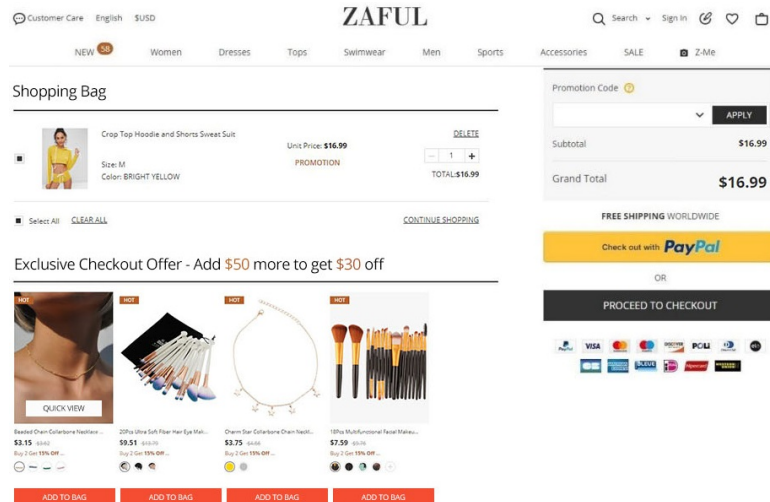


Figure 33. Zaful.com updated checkout page

As it is shown on the above picture, the offer message “Add \$175.01 more to get \$110” has been transferred below the shopping bag section giving customers the opportunity to get the discount instantly by adding the right amount of products on their bag.

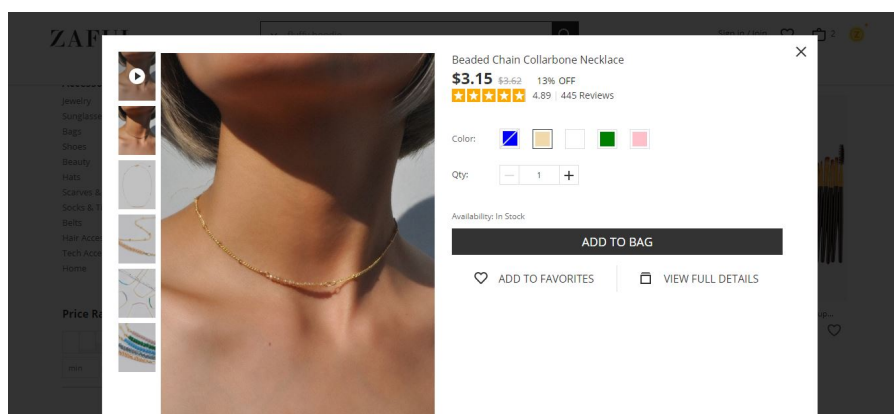


Figure 34. Product preview page

Before adding a product on their bag, users can review the item by hovering on it and clicking on the **QUICK VIEW** option. The product review page appears on the above screenshot and represents the location where users are able to choose a specific variation or quantity of the selected product.

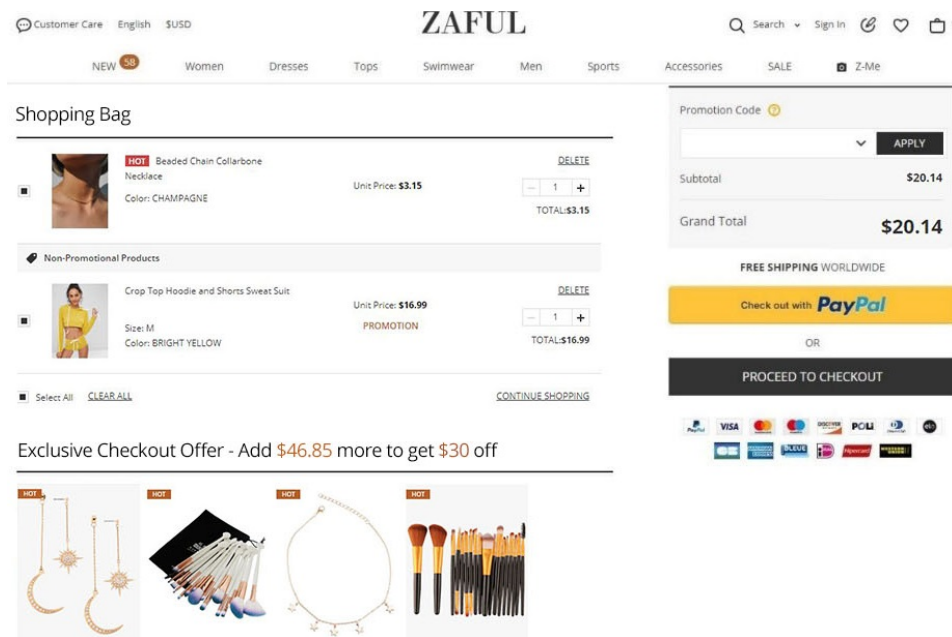


Figure 35. Zaful.com checkout page – After adding a product

After users have added a product to their product list, three main events will take place. The first and most profound is that the new product is added to the shopping bag as it is visible on the above picture. The second change refers to the update of the remaining amount of dollars that need to be spent by customers in order to receive the 30\$ discount. As it seems on the screenshot, after the addition of the new item into the bag, the 50\$ reduced by 3.15\$ which is the price of the added product. The last change that has taken place is connected to the update of the featured products list since a new product came to replace the one been added by the customer. The application of this edit comes to give a new buying option to the users who want to reach the amount of 50\$ in order to receive the 30\$ discount.

Taking everything into consideration, the conclusion of the above representation is that the current technique supports user goals in the usability level as it provides viewers with two clear sections, the section of the shopping bag and the exclusive offer. Given that fact and having in mind that everything takes place in the checkout page, the ease of completion rate remains at good levels and there is an overall satisfaction from the side of the user. On the other hand, zaful.com can take advantage of their offers in the best possible way of satisfying their cross-selling purposes on a great extent.

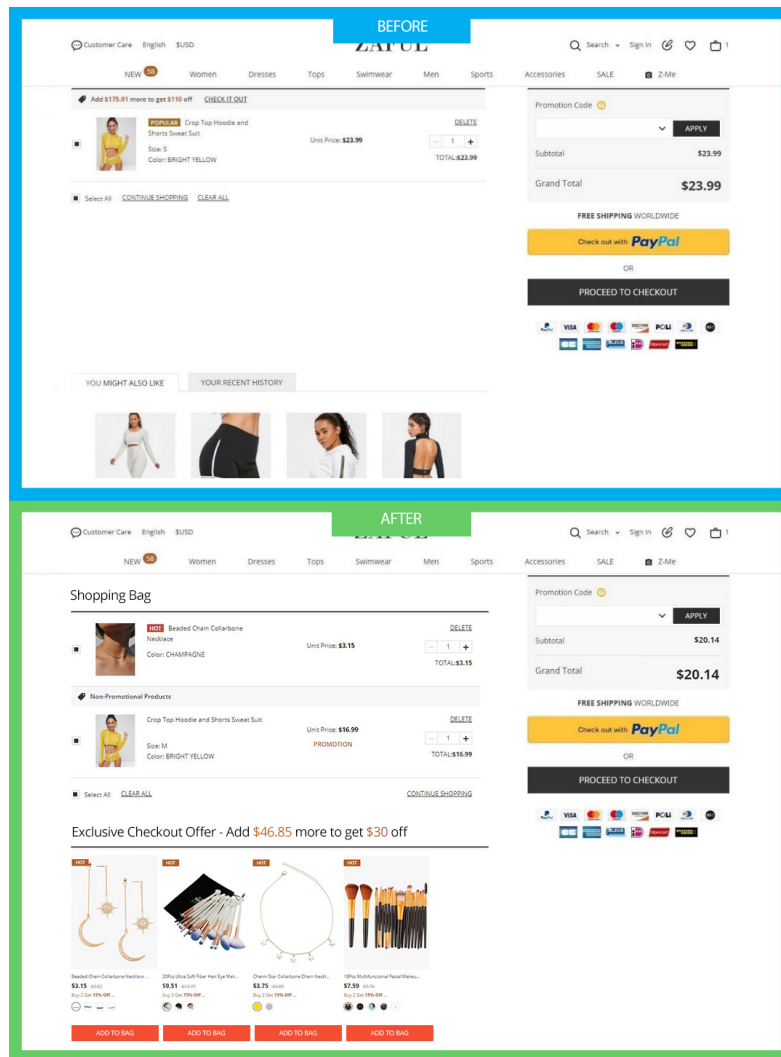


Figure 36. Zaful.com checkout page - Before and after

6. Conclusions

Having analyzed both the negative and positive effects of a great number of cross-selling and up-selling techniques, we can safely reach to the conclusion that there is no magical method that brings a perfect result to the users and simultaneously to the business. Every applied method makes an effort to satisfy both sides with some of them to achieve it better than others. In that terms, these techniques, which had a better impact to a usability level, gather a few common characteristics that make them stand out from the majority of the cross-selling and up-selling methods.

For the above reasons, we are going to provide a list of those design principles that should be followed by every method that wants to increase its dynamic and help both users and online platforms to achieve their goals. Therefore, each technique should be applied based on the below requirement:

1. **Prioritization:** Each element inside a web page has a specific role and value for the customer, thus, the sales techniques should follow the value hierarchy. For instance, when the cross-selling occurs inside the product page with the form of recommended products, the list of products should not be located before the main product's information as apparently, this is the reason that user has visited that page. In that terms, online stores should find ways to add as much value as they can to their featured products list in order users to remain satisfied while scrolling on the page even when they face recommended products or services.
2. **Categorization:** A web page that takes care of categorization, helps users to understand faster website's structure and give a meaning to the elements that are placed on it. Thus, users don't get distracted by cross-selling or up-selling elements and the platform's usability remains stable. Another great example of categorization is connected to the featured products lists. When online stores intent to present many featured products or services to its customers, a good categorization is more than necessary as it helps users to navigate and reach their preferable products or services.
3. **Personalization:** Cross-selling and up-selling techniques can be definitely more effective when they are combined with personalized content. This content can either be a title that "speaks" to the customers or a category of featured products that are personalized to customer's old preferences. Trust, is one of the most important factors in e-commerce

and when users are faced to personalized content, trust builds faster, and therefore, visitors turn into customers more efficiently.

4. **Graphics:** Besides the location of the cross-selling or up-selling elements, the graphics play a crucial role in the level of trust and the user experience. The orientation and colors of sale elements should be aligned to the whole website in order to create a clean interface which will help the user to execute. Furthermore, the call-to-action messages should stand out with more vigorous colors such as red, orange and yellow, keeping a user-friendly character
5. **Dark Patterns:** Every dark pattern that tries to confuse or manipulate the user should be eliminated from every cross-selling and up-selling technique. Dark patterns may increase the online store's profits in short term, but they often damage platform's usability and company's prestige.

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